

editions, and the history of nursing which she and Miss Nutting prepared is a classic. But this represents only one segment of her interest. I cannot even say it was always the dominant interest, for the rights of women have been well to the fore. In her years with us, everyone admired her, none feared her, though she was sometimes very fierce in her denunciations. Reputed a man-hater, we knew her a lover of mankind. Though a pacifist, she believed in militant suffrage, and one eventful election day, when women in New York were appropriating the tactics of the English suffragettes, the captain of our precinct came in after the polls closed and very repentantly asked me to apologise for him to Lavinia Dock, whom he greatly admired. 'For,' said Captain Hardy, 'I couldn't arrest her, I just couldn't do it, and I know that was what she wanted.'

Nursing and Health.

Writing of Nursing and Health, Miss Wald states: "Doubtless among the outstanding phenomena within the memory of the living are the vast sums and the vast educational programmes that have been poured out in efforts to care for the sick, to prevent illness, and to popularise the subject of health.

"Perhaps no work that is at once scientific and immediately concerned with the happiness and well-being of men and women ever bestowed benefits comparable to those achieved in the struggle toward a higher level of health. The results are rewarding. . . . The fact that many devastating diseases have been controlled—and some almost eliminated—through the intelligent application of new knowledge and techniques has proved the validity of modern science. . . . The torch lighting the path is the certainty that illness is to a great extent preventable. Each achievement seems to prophesy another."

Concerning Public Health Nurses, President Hoover's Research Committee on Social Trends reported that in 1909 they counted only 1,413, and in 1931 numbered 15,865, and added "the importance of the public health nurse cannot well be over-estimated." Yet it is only forty years since Miss Wald with her friend began this work in the homes of New York City, and defined the service as "Public Health Nursing."

"Those familiar with the nurses are amazingly impressed by the quality of their work and the initiative they take not only in their profession but in the social problems so intimately identified with their service. They are the indispensable carriers of the findings of the scientists and the laboratories to the people themselves, using their sympathy and training to make as intelligible as language permits the facts of health and life. What a change is this from the priestly secrecy of the old-fashioned medical practitioner! Educators, whether in this field or another, realise that different methods must be employed to meet different degrees of intelligence; and that the receptivity can best be gauged by the instructor. It is evident that the success of the nurse flows from her unparalleled opportunity for explaining, and for making a teaching demonstration of every treatment she gives. The sickroom becomes the classroom, and the value of her lesson does not diminish because it must needs be given in the simplest form."

Concerning the evolution of the nurse, Miss Wald writes:—"Of late years the practitioners have moved over to the nurses some of the offices which were at one time the exclusive responsibility of the doctors. The physicians recognise the nurse's share in modern medical science, and the relationship is enhanced in dignity and value by the attitude of the groups toward one another.

"The struggle to obtain the more dignified position was difficult because there was for a long time an acceptance of submission to absolute hospital management and to com-

mercial middlemen, and the nurses had no voice in their own affairs. There was stubborn resistance to the emergence of the nurse from these controls, which seemed to cling like barnacles. Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, of England, an intrepid leader, organised the opposition; she finally secured government recognition of nursing as a profession, with state examination and the right of nurses to sit on the examination board or council. The nurse question had become the woman question. . . . The international group soon crystallised; it now maintains headquarters in Geneva, and its members are definitely helpful to each other."

Much more might be quoted with advantage did space permit, but we hope we have indicated that every nurse interested in social service, and all should be, should possess or have access to this most illuminating book.

MARGARET BREAY.

A SORT OF FAIRY TALE.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer presided recently at a banquet organised by the Committee of the British Memorial to Marie Curie, the discoverer of radium, at Claridge's Hotel, when her daughter, Mlle. Eva Curie, was the guest of honour.

The banquet was an intensely interesting gathering. The immediate purpose of the fund is to provide £50,000 for the endowment, extension, and maintenance of the Marie Curie Hospital at Hampstead, which exists for the benefit of women suffering from cancer.

Mlle. Eva Curie, in replying to the tribute to the memory of her mother, said there was a little sentence that her mother often repeated and which appeared a very striking illustration of her career and character. "In science," she said, "we should be interested in things, not persons." To her mother those words meant chiefly that her own person was of no importance compared to the things to which she had devoted her life—compared to science that she loved, compared to the progress of human knowledge that she served with all of her intelligence.

* * *

Five years ago they had given her mother's name to a beautiful and generous work. To-day, instead of celebrating only the memory of that relentless worker, instead of burying her in the grave of the past, they prolonged her life in the life of a big institution, the Marie Curie Hospital, which developed every day. They made Marie Curie live in that future to which she used to give all her thoughts.

The discovery of radium carried with it the marvellous power of relieving pain. And so Marie Curie gave up her rule of life "to be interested in things, not persons" the day that she knew that there were thousands of persons who were suffering and whom she could help. All the passion that she scorned to devote to the seeking of honours, of personal glory, or of financial advantages she devoted to trying to help those who needed her and whom she had suddenly the marvellous power to relieve. Relief of pain was the most real reward that Marie Curie could receive. It was a sort of fairy tale that, besides a great scientific discovery, a woman should have given to the world a new medical treatment of one of the most awful diseases. The work the hospital had achieved was a chapter of that fairy tale.

It was announced that £3,857 had been promised as the result of the night's appeal for funds for the hospital.

To mark the Royal Jubilee in a manner which is believed to have the King's sympathy and approval, the *Sun* newspaper has launched a King's Jubilee Shilling Fund for hospitals in New South Wales, and is heading the list with 2,000 shillings. The hospitals urgently need help.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)